

**The Times-Dispatch**

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RICHMOND, SEPTEMBER 27, 1913.

## A WELSH POET OF VIRGINIA.

Through these columns has flowed some argument as to the worth of Virginia's literary men, and how they stand up against New England's gifted authors. Nothing has been decided, of course, and we might better be honoring all our writers rather than disputing about their worth. At least, that is the opinion of Dr. Lyon Tyler, expressed in his very charming letter about a Welshman of genius, Goronwy Owen, who once lived in Virginia, and who was acclaimed by his fellow countrymen as "the greatest genius of this age that ever appeared in our country (Wales)." We suppose few Virginians have ever heard of a Welsh genius who was master of William and Mary College, and we wonder that not one of the critics of our literature from the North know of his name. Yet Dr. Tyler writes that Owen is held in enthusiastic estimation by his countrymen, and that they have erected to his memory a beautiful tablet in the Cathedral Church at Bangor.

We must, with Dr. Tyler, speak only from hearsay as to the beauty of Welsh poems. His ode "Cywydd Y Farn Fawr" has a striking and melodious title—if it be pronounced anything like it is written—and the Bishop of London called him "the most finished writer of Latin since the days of the Roman Emperors." His metrical feats were certainly of no mere temporary value, else we would not read of four editions of his poetical works, the last published in 1876.

The point is this. Does Virginia care enough for the memory of her dead authors to proclaim by some small memorial the part they played in her past? Goronwy Owen's grave has recently been found in Brunswick County. Our historic soil has given rest to this singer of another nation. Dr. Tyler believes, and we trust he is right, that those who love genius, whatever its birthplace, may feel inspired to put a stone over this unmarked grave or perhaps give to William and Mary College a tablet to be erected in the college memorial hall to the scholarly and poetic gifts of this one-time teacher.

There is something broad and catholic in this idea. It is what other nations would rejoice in doing. We may, for commercial reasons, let Poe's old office be torn down. Here is a simpler tribute to a brother poet we can get pay.

**A BROAD STREET FAIRY STORY.**

There are always fairies on Broad Street. So also are there peaches and queens. But this was another kind.

She was a most beautiful lady of pure wax. She came to town with Fashion Week, and she stood with admirable patience in a big glass window, and never moved or blushed, no matter what they said of the full skirts, for she was quite different. Her dress was creamy white, and there was a lot of it. It billowed and ruffled around her statuette—really, figure like foam of the sea. Over it was cast sheen of the stars. Her blonde hair flashed with silver things. The slit in her skirt had turned topsyturvy, and in true fairy style had changed into a train. Her tiny pumps were ivory satin and her long gloves were of clear pearl. You knew her, once when Cinderella lived, and before fairies became ungenial—whatever that may mean.

She was so beautiful that you expected a prince to come through the crowd and claim her. You would have given her a vote, or anything else. None of the other royal ladies who have appeared at the crowds all week looked so like a dream girl, and a bride, and a memory all in one. And at that there were many handsome ones among the visitors, and some of them had real hair.

There she stood late at night toward the middle of the week, and the lights flicked out the curves of her cheek, and she smiled and smiled and smiled—while a wonderful thing to do, and proves her fairness. Yet there was no prince, nor any throng of admirers. There was just one worshiper. She was black as the fairy was white. She was, well, say about thirteen. She was somebody's little negro drudge, plodding home with a basket. Her clothes were pitiful, and she did not smile.

She just stood and looked. Her eyes peered the filmy splendor she would never see again. She looked as if she would have died happy just lazing the bridal whiteness. She was too far below for envy. She felt only adoration for the vision that had flashed into the barren room of her life.

What gifts had the fairy for the little girl? What promises flashed from the smiling face? What hopes clustered in the white folds for the soul in the street? Did the fairy whisper to her of a happy future?

The Mayor of Newark has proclaimed a holiday Saturday in honor of the baseball pennant won by the home team. Probably the fans would rather have that day long about next July.

The home reading course for farmers' wives in Virginia covers such nice cozy things as good roads, typhoid, farm economics, domestic science and tuberculosis. For recreation, we might slip in a few copies of differential calculus or the Koran.

After winning five pennants it looks like Connie Mack might demand to be called "Cornelius McMillendy," and get by with it.

The Irish object to the vote of Lord Mayor O'Shea, of Dublin, because he is an American. And think of how many times "Tammany lets any plain Irishman vote!

What's become of the sweet old fast color girl that could step out o' her skirts? Did you ever know a good man that was a good politician?

## GAS LESSONS FOR RICHMOND.

The offer by the Southern Gas and Electric Company to lease the city gas plant at \$140,000 a year, plus other charges, proves nothing save what The Times-Dispatch has urged for months, namely, that the gas question needs clean-cut investigation. Richmond cannot make head nor tail of this offer or of its own basis for rates until it finds out what it has, and on what capital charges and depreciation allowance the gas plant is to be judged. It is difficult to tell whether the offer of \$0-cent gas within one year and 70-cent gas within ten years, and the rental of \$140,000 means any gain to the city or the consumer. The lower price sounds alluring, but with a larger income now than \$140,000, we may be getting our money's worth in other city improvements. Nobody knows.

The possible interpretation of the offer is that there is something wrong with our municipal gas business. The difficulty may be supposed of two shapes. We can conclude that the municipal ownership of the gas utility is fundamentally a mistake. It does not work, and no matter what perfection the public ownership management reaches, it will still not be able to furnish service as cheap as a private company. We do not think that this conclusion is forced on Richmond by the facts, and, until it is, we see no need of sacrificing the public control of the gas business.

The second conclusion possible under the premises is that, although municipal ownership is successful in other things or in other places, it does not here deliver the gas to the people as cheaply as it can be delivered by a private company. In short, if the proposition of the company is a real saving to Richmond, then something is the matter with the way our gas plant is run. This cannot yet be admitted for the simple reason that the financial facts of the Richmond administration cannot be compared with the offer of the outside. We do not know how our own business stands.

This condition should be remedied. Technical and financial experts should straighten out our own gas business. They might be guided by this offer. They can figure out about how much the Southern Gas Company allows for its capital investment, for depreciation, for extensions and for other charges. Then we might see what the rate per 1,000 feet would be on that basis, and how much surplus would come to the city. By studying the ideas of private concerns we might get a rational way of adjusting all the conflicting theories of our own affairs.

Neither the Council nor the Board need do anything hasty. The gas business ought to be worth more to us than anybody else. Let us make it so.

**THE WINGED VICTORY.**

One decade ago, Orville and Wilbur Wright were making little running leaps into the air on flimsy wings across Kitty Hawk sands. To-day we read in the same column of Garros, who flew some 550 miles from Europe to Africa, and of Pezoud, who dies upside down and turns completely over in flight. We have paid a heavy toll of lives for our knowledge, but it is not too much to proclaim in very truth our mastery of the air.

The lesson from Pezoud's flutters with death are plain. Man can become so intimately a part of his aerial car that he can flick from left to right, up and down, and cut figures, swerve and dart. There has been lingering the fear that we would never in fact challenge the supreme flying of the birds, because our brains and nerves might not be quick enough to turn valves and swing levers so that we could be certain of landing safely. Yet this wizard Frenchman can drop several hundred feet with almost vertical planes, and right himself without losing control of his craft. He is not deflected by the rush of air, or confused by strange positions. His nervous reactions of eye and hand enable him to do what he wants when he wants. He has even turned his aeroplane blunt up and climbed vertically for a hundred feet. He is no longer the man in the machine. He is part of the machine, governing all its flimsy powers by instinct. We need no other proof of this than his charming naïveté: "Ah, you should have felt the thrill of it! It's all very sweet and grand fun."

He may perish at his thrilling fun, but he has shown the hidden powers of men.

The more utilitarian lesson of Garros's feat is that transatlantic flights are just beyond the future. He himself believes that to fly from Europe to America is not humanly impossible, though just now he believes it morally impossible. Nine out of ten attempts would fail. It can be done, but not with the precision that marks an achievement in growth, but by the luck of daring trial.

It will not be long, though, until some strong man will fly across the Atlantic. Garros thinks it could be best accomplished in three leaps, from England to Iceland, from there to Newfoundland, and thence to this country. Each stage of the trip would be only a little longer than the transatlantic flight.

All in all, that statue they call the Winged Victory may be a fitting monument to the pioneers who have taught us to have faith in the air, and in the godlike gifts of men.

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## WHICH SIDE FOR CAR STOPS?

In any change of the traffic rules, Richmond should consider carefully the wisdom and expediency of requiring that all street cars stop on the near side of cross streets. This practice has the sanction of use in such cities as Washington and St. Louis. Its manifest advantage is that it will make for safety. When the stop is made before crossing the street, the car is under complete control both as it approaches the intersecting traffic and as it resumes its passage. There is less danger that a heavy car, loaded with passengers, will dash across a street. This danger has been aggravated by the dependence motormen put in the modern air brake to bring their vehicles to a stop within a short distance. They keep up speed until very near the crossing. The stop at the near corner will prevent this, as far as the points at which stops are made is concerned.

On the other hand, there is one discomfort and one danger connected with the near-side stop. The rear entrance is not brought even with the stepping-stones from the sidewalk to the tracks. In bad weather every passenger must walk down the road through mud and snow to reach the back platform. In addition, there is the risk that running time may be interfered with by people who wait for the car to stop before they walk to the point where it can be entered. This habit, and that of waiting on the familiar far side, can be overcome by a little thought. The new danger is that people crossing the street in front of a car motionless on the near side may forget to look up and see when it gets in motion. Now we pass behind the car and do not have to watch it.

The near-side stop at transfer and switching points would help, as there is no reason for the present system of stopping on both sides of the street, and the near-side stop would enable the switching to be done while the passengers were being taken aboard. Considerable time would thus be saved. In this connection, why does the car company not provide regular switchmen at corners where traffic is heavy and changes of route frequent?

## CHILDREN THE BEST CROP.

The man who doubts the future of the South industrially or socially should read the little sermon on cotton crops versus children in this week's Progressive Farmer.

The text runs thus: "When we take the children out of school to help save the cotton crop we are committing a double crime against them. Not only are we robbing the soil of power, but at the same time we are depriving them of the opportunity of securing that education which will be doubly necessary to them in order that they may make a living from the soils that we have already exhausted. Better have less cotton and let those little backs grow straight and strong in play, and have those eyes and brains employed in the schoolhouse that is now empty."

There is no finer conservation doctrine preached in this broad land than that. Save the land and teach the children! The words might become a slogan for the whole South. They are not the fine theories of some man in a library. They appear in the middle of a practical agricultural paper, right next to articles on cotton-bale tare, and the prevention of cotton anthracnose. They are the fundamentals of faith to all who are laboring to make the South a rich and happy region.

The remedy suggested to the cotton-grower, and it has meaning for all other farmers, is to cultivate less land. It is possible for one man to plant many more acres than he himself can harvest. When picking and gathering time comes round, he must call on his children "to save the crop." He sees only the loss in money. He forgets the loss in progress for the next generation. He also overlooks that by careful close cultivation of a smaller area he may be able to make almost as much money as by tacking too much.

This ideal of protecting the land and training the children to make more out of it than their fathers did is the heart of our hope for the next generation of farmers. It applies in Virginia, as it does in the big cotton countries. It applies to the spring season as well as the fall. It means that the best crop is good people, and not dollars.

Has Secretary Daniels' order that all sailors shall be taught to sing anything to do with the scarcity of fish?

If the Treasury gets peevish because Ty Cobb broke a few rules, why, hell up and buy the blamed thing.

In other States, autumn is called "the melancholy days," but in the Old Dominion it is a time of corn and wine, of azure skies and violet-scented zephyrs, of glorious days and nights of delicious repose, a time of possum and persimmons, wood smoke and saucages, gorgeous foliage and cur-tailed notes.

The sulphuric acid manufacturers and plate-glass insurance concerns view with ecstasy the approaching visit of Grandam Pankhurst.

"Go ahead, you hog, and hoard up all the gold you can. You may need it some day to pay your crazy son's lawyers' fees for escaping from a lunatic asylum," advises the Sandy Valley News.

Even if the Court of Impeachment does not convict Sulzer, it ought at least to mandamus him to get a hair cut.

That "he" in which the Administrative Board inters so many complaints makes things smooth all right.

Aviator Pezoud, turning somersaults in an aeroplane, should remember the tragic fate of Humpty Dumpty.

The Irish object to the vote of Lord Mayor O'Shea, of Dublin, because he is an American. And think of how many times "Tammany lets any plain Irishman vote!

## ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT

By ROY K. MOULTON.

**Arcadia.**

A place where I can hang my hat  
And know that I am home;  
A place from whence I will know  
I'll never care to roam.

A place where there is no dissent  
And love reigns e'er supreme;  
Where no one cares how time is spent  
And I can sit and dream.

A place where no collectors come  
To spoil a happy day;  
A place where lawnmowers do not hum  
Nor other fellows play.

A place where phonographs don't rasp,  
No pianolas pound;  
A place where neighbors do not gasp  
And peddle lies around.

A place where skeeters do not sleet  
And autos do not chug;  
A quiet and serene retreat,  
Without a single mite or bug.

Where time need not be reckoned by  
And I could take my ease  
Arcadia's the place where I  
Could do as I darn please.

**The Diary of a Bonehead.**

When I bought my second-hand automobile I called myself an optimist, my wife called me an old-fashioned frump, and my friends called me a fool. It always takes friends to tell you the truth about yourself. My friends were right. Friends always are. That's the worst of it.

The man who sold it to me was a lousy brother, and he took a good lodge brother to pull off a stunt of that kind with neatness and dispatch. "This car hasn't any foredoors, electric lights, self-starter or cigar lighter," said he, "but (impressively) it has an engine."

I have found since that he spoke the truth. I know it has an engine, for the engine has already cost me \$157.85. That is \$12 more than I paid for the car in the first place. I have not dared to go out of sight of a repair shop with it. The repair shops are not frequent enough in this country. There is only one every two blocks. There should be one in every block.

I gave my car away to a gentleman with a large family along in June, and he brought it back next day and threatened to sue me for attempting his life. The next man I gave the car to kept it two days and then brought it back and presented me a bill for \$25.15 for repairs he had made during the interim. One man kept it two weeks, and then sneaked it into my garage at night. The only hope for me is a fire, unless I can take it back some night and leave it in the barn of the friend who sold it to me.

**According to Uncle Abner.**

Mrs. Hank Tumms ain't going to give another reception at her home until she red plush furniture comes into the house.

St. Haskins says keepin' summer boarders has farmin' beaten to a frazzle. The wheat crop may fail and the front kill the peaches, but the crop of summer resorters goes on forever. There is one born every minute, and it is mighty discouraging to a feller who has paid \$19 for a note and real to sit all day without a bite, and have a kid with an old 5-cent bamboo pole sit next to him and catch a fish every minute, but such is generally the irony of fate.

It is just as well sometimes that a feller is satisfied to be poor. It wouldn't make much difference if he felt any other way about it.

There is a lot of the old-fashioned woman who used to cover everything with gilt paint and hang it up in the parlor?

## Voice of the People

**Wants a Dry Fair.**

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir—I have noted with regret the repeated references to the "dry" controversy between the Christian and temperance organizations of the State and the disgrammatical and unbecoming language of the fair directors in their determination to sell liquor at the State Fair, or to struggle against such sale in every way possible.

You will remember, Mr. Editor, that during the summer and autumn, wherever religious and temperance bodies have met, they have adopted resolutions against the sale of liquor at the fair. This has afforded the fair directors the opportunity of knowing the sentiments of a very large and respectable number of the people of the Commonwealth; and that resort should not be had to the courts is but the logical putting into practice of the sentiments expressed, and is not an advantage of any one, nor should it surprise any one.

I think it is also to be regretted that the fair directors have decided to stand upon the very narrow ground of their statutory rights in this matter. Courts, under pressure of what they deem requirements of public policy, often make peculiar decisions. I remember that about a dozen years ago the Supreme Court of Appeals decided on a case coming up from Charlottesville that there was no double taxation involved, while now every one agrees in less flagrant case than the one I mention that there is most outrageous double taxation practiced under our laws in Virginia.

It is doubtless the ostensible object in connecting a fair like that annually held in Richmond to do so for the moral and material upbuilding of the people; for these two principles lie at the very foundation of all social well-being. If the sale of liquor at the fair, or anywhere else, is conducive to the advancement of the people, then it could be encouraged, and it is a matter of state and also as an exhibit.

## Abe Martin

**NOW READY! OYSTERS ANY STYLE**

His connection with the college was cut short in this way. There was a rivalry between Mr. Owen, becoming too merry with the wine-cup, led the grammar boys in a row with the boys of the town. This seems to have so exasperated the board of visitors that Mr. Owen thought it prudent to resign his position, and he was glad enough to accept a parish in Brunswick, one of the frontier counties, where he married for the third time, and grew old. His besetting weakness for drink followed him to the end, and the records of Brunswick show that the grand time, at least, presented him for getting drunk.

While we are compelled to speak with great doubts of the value of the church, we can speak with untainted praise, if contemporary evidence be true, of the character of the scholarship and poetic genius. The poet, Lewis Morris, who helped him materially in his early life, said that "Goronwy Owen was the greatest genius of this age that ever appeared in our country (Wales)." He is said

## THE ULTIMATE CONSUMER AND HIS QUEST FOR TARIFF REVISION DOWNWARD.

By John T. McCutcheon.

(Copyright, 1913, By John T. McCutcheon.)



He starts out determined to reach his goal, but the way is long and wearisome and he almost desponds. At that moment a smiling stranger offers to give him a lift on his journey, and when he gratefully accepts the smiling stranger kidnaps him and starts rapidly in the wrong direction.



The poor victim of this deceit is subjected to intense pressure for four years by his captors, but finally, being squeezed so very thin, he makes his escape and once more resumes his journey toward his goal. Once again the smiling stranger offers to give him a lift, and in return he gives the stranger an awful buffet.



Having thus discharged his duty he resumes his plodding way, still hopeful but somewhat skeptical. Finally a tall and scholarly looking gentleman in a bicycle offers to help him along his way, and the two proceed without further mishap until stopped by the fierce growling of dogs.



The tall gentleman, in nowise deterred, soon has the fierce dogs eating out of his hand, and they in turn lead the way to the Ultimate Consumer's goal—Tariff Revision Downward.

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to have been not only a perfect master of the Latin language, but of the Welsh language and Welsh metres. His ode "Cywydd Y Farn Fawr" is said to be unsurpassed by any poem in any language in power and moral sublimity. It takes rank with Milton's "Paradise Lost" and Dante's "Inferno." The Welsh language is a perfect mystery to me, as it is to most Virginians. I believe, and I want it understood that I can only speak from hearsay.

Many of his poems were written in Wales and England, before he came to America, but, perhaps, his most touching and beautiful verse was composed in Virginia. His requiem on his dead friend, Lewis Morris, is praised by Welsh critics as particularly pathetic. But this is not all. It establishes Owen's mastery of metres by accomplishing one of the greatest literary feats connected with the Welsh language. It is written in each of the four and twenty bardic metres, and what makes the performance almost marvelous, every line terminates with the same syllable. Nor is this all. The bardic stanzas form what is termed a chain of epithets, linked together by the former englynion the commencement of the second stanza.

The first edition of the poet's work was published in 1763, five years after Owen's death. A second edition appeared in 1817; a third in 1860, and a fourth, beautifully bound in gilt, was edited by Rev. Robert Jones in 1876.

With a revival of interest in Welsh literature, dating his new birth from the year 1820, Owen has been enthusiastically estimated. To mark their appreciation of his classic attainments and genius his countrymen in 1831 erected a beautiful tablet to his memory in the Cathedral Church at Bangor, with a eulogistic inscription.

The Latin equivalent of his name was "Goronwy," and in adapting this to his English residence, he called himself "Goronwy." In Welsh he signed himself "Goronwy," generally "Goronwy Ddu" or "Goronwy Ddu O'Ffwrdd," "Goronwy the Black" or "Goronwy the Black of Offord." In personal appearance he was a little, round, but firm and wiry, supple and active. His complexion was dark, his hair and beard black, his eyes, even when closely shaven peering out from his lip and chin. His eye, however, is said to have been the most remarkable feature of his face, and he was said to be "fired under the influences of emotion."

His grave in Brunswick County has been recently revealed, and certainly deserves some fitting mark of recognition. Perhaps this article may lead the eye of some admirer of genius who is willing and able to see that this is done.

A tablet to his memory in the chapel of William and Mary, which serves the present college as a memorial hall, would doubtless be appropriate and be a more public tribute to his scholarship and poetic genius.

LYON G. TYLER,  
William and Mary College, September 23, 1913.

## Cheap Labor Causes Wrecks.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir—Briefly commenting upon an article in Saturday's Times-Dispatch, under the head of "Southern Railroads Cause Unknown," which was signed "Lyon G. Tyler," will say that we appreciate your correspondent's attitude in this matter. Perhaps this article may lead the eye of some admirer of genius who is willing and able to see that this is done.

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In working cheap labor, which generally guarantees unskilled service.

Not until a mere infant telegraph operator, who had not even been examined as to the rules of blocking and manipulating trains, and who had been sold continuously on duty something less than a week, allowed two trains to enter the same block, resulting in the death of President Spencer of the Southern Railway, did the nation awake to such criminal conditions as existed on the various railroad systems. Prior to this accident railroads throughout the country were employing the cheapest class of telegraph operators available, requiring them to block and dispatch trains, thereby daily hazarding the lives of thousands. The recent catastrophe at New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad is just another instance of the negligence, or lack of skill, of the men who were employed. It is a part of an employee, or possibly the long hours of service required of him. Telegraphers and train dispatchers on all railroads fill positions second to none in point of responsibility and trust, but the wages paid are so low that these positions are picked up by rattle-brained boys, often too young to realize the stern responsibility resting upon them, when they realize the age of reasoning they seek more lucrative positions elsewhere. Why do you find so few middle-aged men in the telegraph service? Or why do we have so many wrecks? Compare the telegraph and train dispatching with that of the engineers and conductors, and there you will find the conditions demand an equalization of wages for equal skill and intelligence, and not until this is effected can the best service be expected. How long will the people encourage the railroads in filling their coffers by experimenting with amateur telegraph operators and signalmen, at the cost of the annual death rate by wrecks? The only solution is to pay the telegraphers, the signalmen, the bridge-men, carpenters, roadway and section men with a new system of signals. One of the foremen in the signal department on this road, who has been with the company ever since a small boy, having worked his way up from an apprentice, now having thoroughly mastered his work, was asked to take responsibilities thrust upon him, and did not feel that it would be an unreasonable increase. Imagine the price of a supplement of ten or fifteen dollars a month to his wages would be accepted with good cheer, but he did not get a him. Unknown. But it was all in vain. This company has generated all kinds of excuses for refusing this slight increase. Imagine the price of a supplement of ten or fifteen dollars a month to his wages would be accepted with good cheer, but he did not get a him. Unknown. But it was all in vain. This company has generated all kinds of excuses for refusing this slight increase. 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